

The Seagull



Issue 761 Friday 9th February 2024

Next Week is Week 1

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HEADTEACHER'S NEWS

Gold Seagull Winners

Congratulations to this week's Gold Seagull winners:



Leonard (pictured above) Year 7 – first double Gold Seagull winner and Zoha Year 10



This week we celebrated our first Double Gold Seagull winner and Sixth Form Diamond Award winner Aisha Year 13 (pictured on

the left) who both embody the ACHIEVE principles. Students work incredibly hard to achieve these awards and make the most of the vast opportunities on offer at JRCS and I hope to present many more of these in the coming months. Involving ourselves in the community is one of the ACHIEVE principles and it is important to us that our excellent reputation in the local community is upheld.

Road Safety and Behaviour in the Community

When students travel to and from school, they are representing the Jo Richardson Community School, and we expect the same high standards and respect that students show within school towards the local community. Students are expected to go straight home after school and not hang around in the local parks and shopping area. We work closely with our neighbours and local businesses to keep our young people safe and we appreciate parental support in encouraging students to be more aware of road safety when commuting to school. Students are reminded to keep all personal belongings safe and out of sight when travelling and to look out for their peers to ensure everyone in our community feels safe. Students should report any concerns about their journey to members of staff so we can intervene at the earliest opportunity.

Year 9 Progress Evening

Year 9 Progress Evening will take place on Wednesday 14th February between 3:45pm and 6:30pm. This event marks a really important time in your child's school journey. On Wednesday, you will not only receive some valuable feedback from your child's teachers, but you and your child will also have a short interview with a member of SLT to discuss and submit their final option choices. Over the last few months, your child has received a lot of information and guidance about the options process and next Wednesday is the final deadline for submitting their options form to us.

Ms Keane
Headteacher

Shrek the Musical 2024



This time last week saw the end of our 2024 musical 'Shrek'. Shrek was the first full-scale musical performed after a pause from Covid, since 'Hairspray' in 2017.

Shrek the Musical is a musical with music by Jeanine Tesori and book and lyrics by David Lindsay-Abaire. It is based on the 2001 DreamWorks Animation film Shrek, along with elements of its sequels. The original Broadway production opened in December 2008, followed by a tour of the United States which opened in 2010, and a re-vamped West End version opened in June 2011.

Shrek has an abundance of wonderful, weird, wacky and colourful characters and offered great opportunity to cast a large amount of our incredibly talented students which, as you can imagine, was a very difficult thing to do!

It shared the poignant message of 'what makes us special, makes us strong' and though we may be different, we are united.



Without the work of our fantastic team, this performance would not have been possible.

The beautiful set was hired in by the fantastic **SCENETEC** and our amazing costumes were by **COSTUME SOLUTIONS**.



The Shrek team would like to thank Ms Keane for your endless support, our amazing colleagues for your kind donations towards props and extra costume, the DT department for your brilliant additions, the numerous staff who have offered their help in various ways, the Business department for your support with interval refreshments, the site team and cleaners for always being on hand, our wonderful Year 13s who have supported, lifted and taken time out to help and our amazing orchestra for their musical assistance. Thank you all so much!

Our students have worked so hard, giving so much of their time towards making this musical a reality. Your tireless commitment and energy are commendable, and we can't wait for you to share your talent with the world!

'Shrek changed a lot of parts about my life, helped me grow not just as an actor but in general, as a person, this musical was a way for me to express myself, it helped me stay positive and bright, especially during the jump from year 10 to 11 and all of the exam stress, needless to say it definitely relieved it all.' - Louie, Year 11

I'm very grateful for every single person who took part in this production to make Shrek the Musical a spectacular show that will be forever cherished in JRCS history. Without commitment, determination, perseverance and resilience, this show wouldn't have been possible. The musical has been a wonderful opportunity given to the school, which allowed me to socialise more during Shrek rehearsals and make new friends. My favourite part of the whole experience is - other than the last show - learning and developing the importance of self-love. We're all different, and that's what makes us united and who we are. I hope we have

more successful productions in the future for many years to come!' - Mmachi, Year 9

'I helped out in the Shrek musical by being a costume assistant, makeup assistant, prop designer, and with set changes as well. Although I wasn't even in Shrek the Musical, it did make me realise one thing - the process and the making of it, as well as the teamwork, were the most important. And the reason behind this is because I got to experience a bit of each of those 4 roles, giving me an insight of what it would be like, which made me really enjoy this. Not only that, but I was also able to see the other side of all the drama teachers, performers, and everyone else that was involved, experiencing all the friendly teamwork in the lovely and genuine environment.' - Raminta, Year 10

'Shrek has brought me joy and self-worth, resilience and the rush of being in stage.' - Michelle, Year 8

Miss Hallas & The Shrek Team

Year 13

Alice in Year 13 has started her training as a special police constable after being accepted into the Metropolitan police. This is a lengthy process and is the first step for her to enter the career path she wishes to follow. Special constables are volunteer police officers who play a vital role in making London safer. By investing her free time, she has the same powers as a regular police constable, and we are very proud of her for giving back to the community. She will need to complete a 20-week training programme and a minimum of 200 hours annually, equating to 16 hours per month. Specials wear the same uniform and have the same powers and responsibilities as regular police officers and enjoy a variety of roles. She carries out duties such as:

- Responding to 999 calls
- Foot and vehicle patrols
- Tackling antisocial behaviour
- Road safety initiatives
- House-to-house enquiries
- Helping ensure public safety and security at both local and major events.
- Presenting evidence in court
- Taking part in 'hotspot' operations to tackle underage drinking, criminal damage, and nuisance and public disorder.

- Offering crime prevention advice and promoting property marking initiatives.

Congratulations Alice from the Sixth Form team.

Year 12 Westminster Trip



Our politics class went to Westminster where we were given a tour around Parliament. As we explored each room, we learnt about the importance of the art and statues around the building and we got to go into the House of Lords, the second chamber of parliament. Inside, we learnt about how the Lords get their role and could see the throne the King sits in for the State Opening of Parliament. We also went into Westminster Hall, where Queen Elizabeth laid in state for four days.

During our visit, we briefly encountered the conservative MP Sir Jacob Rees-Mogg. Then, after our tour, we took part in a workshop, where we learnt more about the process of laws being made. Splitting into groups, we then had the opportunity to enact our own parliamentary debate, taking on the role of the government and the opposition. We debated whether a new law should be introduced lowering the minimum voting age to 16 and came to the conclusion that 16-year-olds should be allowed to vote. Overall, we enjoyed exploring parliament and gained a greater insight into the political history of the government.



Katelyn Year 12

Maths feast competition 2024

Congratulations to the following students for coming second in the Maths feast, which is a national competition in the borough:
Kiera, Tia, Ishmam and Nathan in Year 10.

Miss Fernandes
KS4 Maths Coordinator

MP Question Time Experience



Year 9 are currently learning about leadership and took part in a Question Time experience with their Local MP (Margaret Hodge), the Former Mayor of Hackney (Sudenaz Top), Ms Matin, Dr Jain, Mr Summers and 2 JRCS Student Voice members (Joseph and Elois). The year group took part in an intellectual Q & A session where each form raised their concerns about living in Barking and Dagenham and questions regarding politics and its importance.

Well done!

Miss McMillan
Head of PDE

Year 11 Wellbeing



This week during our Year 11 wellbeing session we had motivational speaker David Hyner in to speak to the year group about being a better you. David taught them a memory technique to help with revision and gave them all a boost of confidence they need to tackle these final few months! #bearhino 🐘

Miss Boulton
Assistant Headteacher

An amazing experience for our JRCS social action team.

Our students presented their social action plan based on tackling mental health issues in our wider community, football club (WHU) and our school.

Presented in front of a brilliant panel which included The Head of WHU Academy along with WHU Academy Scholars.



After an intense competition against other schools, it was our students who came out on top and will be representing West Ham at the National Premier League Inspire event hosted at Arsenal Football Club's Emirates Stadium in April.

Very proud of our students

#plinspires
#winners
#mentalhealth
#socialaction

Miss Hallas
Student Aspirations Coordinator



“Check.... but still one round to Check-Mate!”

JRCS Grand-Master Chess Tournament has just one more week left before the Grand-Master makes their

last move to proclaim “Checkmate” in next week’s final and claims the title of “JRCS Grand-Master 2024”.

Thirty eight games of competitive chess have been played out over the last four weeks with representatives of all year groups involved. Competitors of all experiences have put their best pawns forward and strategised to get to the next round.

This week our remaining four players took their seats to execute the opposition, King. Concentration, study and focus was evident across all four semi-finalists and the ability to be adaptive to their opponents moves, never more important.

Those involved in the semifinals:

Victor-Petru (Year 13) v Charlie (Year 11)
Matas (Year 11) v Wa Kwan (Year 11)

Next week we have the victors of this week’s semi-finals knowing they are just one perfect game away from winning the Grand-Master Final.

Finalists JRCS Grand-Master Chess Tournament 2024:

Victor-Petru (Year 13) v Wa Kwan (Year 11)

Tune into next week’s Seagull for the unveiling of this year’s CHESS GRAND-MASTER.

Miss Campbell
Tournament Organiser

Library News

We are delighted to announce that a selection of book clubs and a poetry recital club will be up and running from next week in the library. Interested students can sign up in the library with Mrs Sumsion or in their English classrooms.

Reading fiction can provide numerous benefits to the reader, these include:

- Stress reduction: Reading fiction is very effective for stress relief.

- Enhanced imagination and creativity: Reading fiction can help you tap into your creativity and exercise your brain.
- Improved memory: Neuroscientists found that becoming engrossed in a novel enhances connectivity in the brain and improves brain function. Interestingly, reading fiction was found to improve the reader’s ability to put themselves in another person’s shoes, to empathise and flex the imagination in a way that is similar to the visualisation of a muscle memory in sport
- Improved exam performance: Regular readers do better in all subject areas.

So, if you’re looking for a way to improve your mental health, reduce stress, and enhance your creativity, reading fiction is a great place to start!

BOOK CLUB TIMES:

Years 9,10,11 Wednesdays 2.00pm-3.00pm

Years 7 & 8 Fridays 3.05 pm – 4.00pm

Books are provided by the library and students will decide as a group which book they would like to start with. From March we will be reading texts from the Carnegie shortlist.

POETRY BY HEART TIMES:

Tuesdays from 3.05pm-4.00pm is Poetry by Heart. This a national competition in which students learn and recite a poem by heart. Please see below for further information:

Mrs Sumsion
Teacher of English

“To find out how we process your personal data, visit the following link: [Privacy Notice for Parents and Pupils](#)”



Wa Kwan
Year 11

Victor-Petru
Year 13

WORLD BOOK DAY 7TH MARCH 2024

READING COMPETITION

Students who read the most books up until the 7th March will win an Amazon Voucher and a book bundle!

World Book Day is all about celebrating the magic of literature and encouraging everyone to discover the joy of reading. So, dive into a book, let your imagination soar, and be part of this global celebration!

Rules:

Your book must be taken from the library.

When you return it, Mrs Sumsion will ask you a few questions about your book and then she will sign your form and you can move onto the next book.

COLLECT YOUR FORM FROM YOUR ENGLISH
TEACHER OR FROM MRS SUMSION IN THE
LIBRARY

WHY 'KINDNESS MATTERS' & HOW DOING GOOD DOES YOU GOOD

'WE MAKE A LIVING BY WHAT WE GET. WE MAKE A LIFE BY WHAT WE GIVE.'

SIR WINSTON CHURCHILL

THE FOCUS FOR THIS YEAR'S MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS WEEK IS 'KINDNESS MATTERS'. IT IS AN OPPORTUNITY TO LOOK INTO THE BENEFIT OF HELPING OTHERS WHICH IS GOOD FOR IMPROVING OUR OWN MENTAL HEALTH AND WELL BEING. HERE ARE SOME IDEAS TO GET YOU THINKING:

ALTRUISM

Altruism is acting in someone else's best interests in order to improve their welfare. When we feel compelled to donate money, shop for someone, call a relative in need or help a neighbour, we are considering the needs of others even when we may not know them. Showing kindness like this, often motivated by empathy, creates a sense of purpose, making us feel good and developing our wellbeing. Children and young people can take part in altruistic activities at home or school. They could create a video for those in isolation, fundraise for a local cause, bake cakes for neighbours or write letters to older members of the community who may feel isolated.



GIVE TO GIVE, NOT TO RECEIVE

Sometimes when we are kind there is no payback, which can make it more difficult to keep being kind. Our natural reaction is to shrink back and withdraw our kind act, feeling frustrated that it has either not been reciprocated or that it has not been valued. This is probably one of the most difficult concepts for children to understand and where the 'random acts of kindness' approach is helpful. If it is a random act then it is 'just because' and for no other reason than a one-off act for someone.



COMMUNITY

When we help others in our community, it improves our wellbeing by helping us to feel less isolated as we connect with others. When we show kindness, it is something which we feel we can control, particularly when things may feel a bit chaotic and unusual. Helping others can often give us a different perspective on our own challenges and our own problems. Peer support, for example, is often overlooked as an important part of improving wellbeing. Older students can often greatly benefit from sharing similar, shared experiences and can offer a level of empathy and understanding that adults may not be able to.



'KINDNESS IS A SILENT SMILE. A FRIENDLY WORD. A HUB OF ENCOURAGEMENT. KINDNESS IS THE SINGLE MOST POWERFUL THING WE CAN TEACH CHILDREN.'

RA KATVIST

GENEROSITY

In the context of kindness, being generous with our time, resources and words can provide a low-cost approach to helping others. A generous act is accessible to all. Giving compliments, for example, are a well-researched way of creating a sense of wellbeing and positivity in a community at school or with family. It helps us to recognise the positivity in others as we actively choose to notice and comment on what is valuable and meaningful in someone else. When compliments are given regularly, consistently and with meaning, the community benefits are far reaching!



HOLDING OTHERS IN MIND

By holding someone in mind we show that we have been thinking about them and that they matter to us. This act of kindness is so important now, more than at any other time, due to isolation. A simple text to say 'I saw... on the telly last night and it made me think of you!' or a quick call to say 'I was just thinking about you yesterday and was wondering how you're doing?' can mean so much. We probably all do this naturally as part of showing kindness and care to others, but perhaps may not appreciate the importance of this for wellbeing.



KINDNESS WITH CAUTION

There is a very helpful analogy that is used when we are in an emergency: 'we should put our own oxygen mask on before putting on someone else's'. What's helpful here is that giving to others can often improve our mental health and wellbeing. However, there are times when helping others can create stress or overwhelm us. This is sometimes called 'compassion fatigue'. So, we must balance our own wellbeing with the wellbeing of others. We should notice if we start to feel resentful or negative or if we start avoiding others, have difficulty concentrating or start experiencing unusual sleep patterns. If this happens it's a good time to take a break or ask someone for help or support.



The
National
College

This guide has been written by Anna Bateman. Anna is passionate about placing prevention at the heart of every school, integrating mental wellbeing within the curriculum, school culture and systems. She is also a member of the advisory group for the Department for Education, advising them on their mental health green paper.



For further info, check out these online resources:

<https://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/blog/random-acts-kindness>

<https://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/campaigns/mental-health-awareness-week/get-involved>

Schools and Colleges Early Support Service: Parent and Carer Webinars



Dear Parents and Carers,

We would like to invite you to attend the **Spring Term** webinar series specially tailored for parents and carers of adolescents, in collaboration with the Schools and Colleges Early Support Service.

The topics have been chosen to reflect core developmental processes in adolescence and common difficulties parents can struggle with. The content is psychoeducational, strategy-based and solution focused. The webinars will cover the following topics:

- How to support your young person with low mood
- Early emerging School Based Avoidance: practical tips and strategies to support your child
- Anxiety in adolescence: how can parents and carers help?
- Adolescent self-harm: how to make sense of it and when to seek support
- Building resilience, staying connected and nurturing your relationship with your teen
- Understanding the impact of bullying on a young person's mental health: practical strategies to help you support your young person to get through their experience and feel okay again
- Managing teen behaviour that challenges: tips and tricks
- Weathering the storms of strong teen emotions: do's, don'ts and when to consider talking to someone
- Understanding the adolescent brain: strategies to help you understand and support young people's mental health and wellbeing

Further details on each webinar are below. To register please click on the relevant Zoom link. After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the meeting.

Schools and Colleges
Early Support Service



Anna Freud

Anxiety in adolescence: how can parents and carers help?

Tuesday 5 March 12:00-13:00

It is normal to sometimes feel anxious, however for some adolescents, anxiety can become a significant problem that stops them from doing things, e.g., talking to new people, going out with friends, or doing their best in exams. The focus of this webinar will be on what parents/carers can do to help their teens who are experiencing anxiety.

It will cover when anxiety is normal vs. problematic, common anxieties during adolescence (exam stress, social anxiety and worries about identity and development), the relationship between parent-child anxiety, and how and when to access support for you and your child. We will also discuss a couple of 'real world' examples of common adolescent anxieties and different strategies that may be helpful in those situations.

[Click here](#) to register.

Adolescent self-harm: how to make sense of it and when to seek support

Wednesday 13 March 17:00-18:00

Adolescence brings about many challenges, including insecurity, self-consciousness, anxiety about one's own body, and peer pressure. It is not uncommon for teenagers to engage in some self-harmful behaviour for a period of time, for instance cutting, hair pulling or scratching. Understandably, these behaviours can be very concerning, distressing, and confusing for parents.

This webinar will provide an overview of the risk factors and methods of self-harm. It will explore the various reasons why young people may self-harm and offer ideas on how parents can talk to and support their teens. Lastly, it will discuss instances of self-harmful behaviour that may require professional support. Places on this webinar won't be limited and there will be an opportunity to ask questions at the end.

[Click here](#) to register.

Building resilience, staying connected and nurturing your relationship with your teen

Tuesday 19 March 12:00-13:00

Adolescence is a time of insecurity, strong feelings and growing autonomy which naturally affects the parent-child relationship and requires parents to find new ways of connecting with their teenagers. Parents may feel left out and worried, and they may experience a sense of loss over the relationship they used to have with their children when they were younger.

This webinar offers ideas on how to maintain and build trust with teenagers, how to stay connected and how to nurture the relationship with their teen. Places on this webinar won't be limited and there will be an opportunity to ask questions at the end.

[Click here](#) to register.

Understanding the impact of bullying on a young person's mental health: practical strategies to help you support your young person to get through their experience and feel OK again

Thursday 21 March 12:00-13:00

While lots of young people experience bullying, it is an incredibly difficult thing to go through and can have a huge effect on your child's mental health and wellbeing. As a parent/carer, it can also feel very challenging and worrying.

This webinar will outline the different ways in which young people are bullied and discuss how this might impact them day to day. There will also be useful practical strategies to help you support your young person to get through their experience and feel ok again.

Schools and Colleges
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[Click here](#) to register.

Managing teen behaviour that challenges: tips and tricks

Wednesday 17 April 12:00-13:00

Most adolescents will at some stage in their development engage in behaviour that parents find challenging and worrying, for instance, substance misuse, being overly argumentative and rejecting, oppositional behaviour and excessive social media use. It can become difficult for parents to find ways of discussing their concerns with their teens who may increasingly not want to hear any advice their parents have to offer. This webinar will provide an overview of adolescent development and the brain, including common challenging behaviours during adolescence. It will discuss different parenting styles and offer tips for parents on how to approach and discuss challenging behaviour with teens, and how to set boundaries. Places on this webinar won't be limited and there will be an opportunity to ask questions at the end.

[Click here](#) to register.

Weathering the storms of strong teen emotions: do's, don'ts and when to consider talking to someone

Tuesday 23 April 12:00-13:00

Adolescence inherently consists of many storms that parents, families, and young people have to weather, many of which are driven by an intensity of emotions that is unique to this developmental stage. Teenagers grapple with their own identity, their social relationships, and their need for autonomy, and in turn parents face the challenge of being left out, managing their own reactions to strong teen emotions, and finding different ways of connecting with their teens.

This webinar will provide an overview of the changes adolescents go through, why teenagers experience such strong emotional fluctuations and how these are linked to processes in the brain. It will offer ideas on how to support teenager with their strong feelings and what to best avoid.

Lastly, the webinar will discuss the difference between normal emotional difficulties in adolescence and issues that may need additional support. Places on this webinar won't be limited and there will be an opportunity to ask questions at the end.

[Click here](#) to register.

Understanding the adolescent brain: strategies to help you understand and support young people's mental health and wellbeing

Thursday 25 April 17:00-18.00

Scientists have discovered that our brains physically change in response to our experiences throughout our lives. The teenage years are a time of significant brain change when young people are learning to adapt to the world around them.

This webinar will provide an insight into the stages of brain development through early childhood, adolescence and into adulthood. We will consider how changes in the brain affect the emotions and behaviour of your young person whilst providing evidence-based strategies to help you understand and support their mental wellbeing.

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[Click here](#) to register.

Parent and carer webinars: on-demand

Schools and Colleges
Early Support Service



Anna Freud

How to support your young person with low mood

This webinar will offer some insight into spotting the signs and symptoms of low mood, understand why young people are vulnerable to experiencing this and offer evidence-based strategies to support a young person.



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How to support your young person when they get their exam results

This webinar will explore ways in which you can support your young person with feelings of anxiety around results day. We will offer top tips from our Young Champions and healthy strategies that you can use to support both yours and your young person's mental wellbeing.

Transition to secondary school: supporting your year 7 child with the ending and new beginning

This webinar will explore ways that you can support your child during this period of change. Top tips will be shared to help you to consider challenges and opportunities that may arise during transition, spotting when your child may be struggling, strategies to help you to support your child and exploring your own wellbeing. Resources will be shared on how you/they might seek further support if needed.



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How to support your young person with anxiety

This webinar explores when anxiety is normal vs. problematic, common anxieties during adolescence (exam stress, social anxiety and worries about identity and development), the relationship between parent-child anxiety, and how and when to access support for you and your child. We will also discuss a couple of 'real world' examples of common adolescent anxieties and different strategies that may be helpful in those situations.

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Anna Freud

Are you worried about your child's speech, language or communication skills?

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To register, email
m.blackmore@wordsfirst.uk

**First session at 11 am on the
19th February 2024**

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Dagenham**